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Chairman: Mr. Wenaweser ..... (Liechtenstein)
later: Mr. Morikawa (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Japan)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Agenda item 109: Human rights questions (*continued*)

(b) Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (*continued*) (A/C.3/57/L.56)

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.56: Extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions

1. **Mr. Hallstrom** (Finland), speaking on behalf of the sponsors, introduced the draft resolution and informed the Committee that Brazil, Lithuania and the Republic of Korea had joined the sponsors. He said that the theme of the draft resolution was the universal right to life and pointed out that, although diverging views had been expressed as to the precise definition of extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, all delegations had agreed that that phenomenon was a deplorable practice that must be eliminated. The draft resolution recognized the important role played by the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions and also acknowledged the historic significance of the establishment of the International Criminal Court, which would contribute to ensuring prosecution and the prevention of impunity.

2. Although the draft resolution did not specifically address the issue of capital punishment, it called on States which still had the death penalty to comply with their obligations pursuant to relevant human-rights instruments. It also reaffirmed the obligation of Governments to investigate all cases of killings committed for any discriminatory reason and to bring those responsible to justice. Negotiations would continue in the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted by consensus.

3. **The Chairman** announced that Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republic of Moldova, South Africa, Suriname and Yugoslavia also wished to sponsor the draft resolution.

4. **Mr. Roshdy** (Egypt) said that the Committee had not reached a consensus on the draft resolution and that many delegations, including his own, would be submitting amendments. He stressed that no delegation condoned such executions, but pointed out that the draft resolution was overburdened with supplementary issues and therefore exceeded its mandate.

Agenda item 102: Advancement of women (*continued*) (A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1)

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1: Future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

5. **Mr. de Barros** (Acting Secretary of the Committee) read out a statement concerning the programme-budget implications of the draft resolution. Pursuant to paragraph 2, the General Assembly would endorse the recommendations made by the Working Group on the future operations of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and would request the Secretary-General to implement those recommendations. In paragraph 57 of its report (A/57/330), the Working Group had recommended the linkage of INSTRAW to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General. In that connection, the Economic and Social Council should be invited to amend the Statute of INSTRAW in accordance with paragraphs 52, 53 and 55 of the report and an amount of $500,000 should be allocated from the regular budget to finance the core activities of the Institute, so as to give it the same status as other institutes of the United Nations system. In addition, the feasibility of establishing an advisory board composed of Member States to replace the Board of Trustees should be examined, the post of Deputy-Director with specific fund-raising responsibilities should be created, and a liaison for INSTRAW should be established within the Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

6. In his note on the situation of INSTRAW (A/57/452), the Secretary-General had indicated, inter alia, that the allocation to INSTRAW of $500,000 to finance its core activities would be sufficient to cover only the salaries and common staff costs of the four current Professional posts for one year, with no funds remaining to cover supporting operating expenses. It was estimated that approximately $1.4 million per year would be needed to fund the Institute's activities at the current minimum level. However, other proposals before the Committee would mean that that estimate would require upward adjustment.

7. Taking into account all provisions of paragraph 57 of the report of the Working Group, it was estimated that the total amount of $1,809,500 per year would be needed. That amount would cover $500,000 for the four current Professional posts, $176,000 for the new post of Deputy-Director, $285,000 for the four current General Service posts, $208,500 per year to provide for minimal administrative resource requirements, including general operating expenses, $400,000 to enable the Institute to carry out minimal substantive activities and $240,000 for a liaison unit for INSTRAW in New York, including $202,800 to cover the annual costs of one Professional and one General Service post and $37,200 for rental of office space, equipment, supplies, travel resources, etc.

8. There were no resources provided under the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 which could be made available to finance INSTRAW operations in 2003. Therefore, any amount that the General Assembly might decide to allocate to enable the Institute to continue its operations in 2003 would need to be provided through an additional appropriation from the contingency fund, established pursuant to General Assembly resolution 41/213.

9. Adoption of draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1 would give rise to additional requirements of $500,000 for the biennium 2002-2003 under section 9 (Economic and social affairs). The provision would represent a charge against the contingency fund and, as such, would require an increase in appropriations for the biennium 2002-2003. Consequently, an additional provision, amounting to $1,309,500, would be required over and above the regular budget resources available under section 9 of the programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003. That amount should be provided from as yet unidentified voluntary contributions.

10. In resolution 45/248, part B VI, the General Assembly had, inter alia, expressed its concern at the tendency of its substantive Committees and other intergovernmental bodies to involve themselves in administrative and budgetary matters, and reaffirmed that the Fifth Committee was the appropriate Main Committee entrusted with responsibilities for administrative and budgetary matters. In line with those responsibilities, the Fifth Committee would decide how to meet the requirements arising from the decisions of the Third Committee.

11. **The Chairman** said that a recorded vote had been requested.

12. **Ms. Kislinger** (Venezuela), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, China and Mexico, which were sponsoring the draft resolution, announced that Greece and Spain wished to join the sponsors. She said the sponsors regretted that a recorded vote had been requested. It was deplorable that financial considerations were being given pre-eminence over the priority issues of the promotion of gender equality and the advancement of women. The wish of some delegations to deny United Nations funds to the only international institute devoted to research and training in the area of gender equality was an unequivocal manifestation of their lack of political will and the changeable nature of their solidarity towards developing countries.

13. Despite the best efforts of the sponsors to reach a viable solution for the future of INSTRAW, the only option offered by certain countries had been the continuation of the status quo. She believed that such a solution would lead to the closure of the Institute, but no country had been willing to make a clear pronouncement in that regard. Furthermore, although there had been consensus regarding the creation of the Working Group, delaying tactics had been employed during the appointment of its members, and its final report had been criticized. She regretted that some delegations had not taken the time to study the report carefully, and drew attention to paragraphs 42 and 43, which clearly stated that the continuation of the status quo, by means of funding from voluntary contributions, was not viable.

14. The Group of 77 and China welcomed the support for the Institute shown by a significant number of countries and wished, in particular, to thank the Spanish delegation for its efforts to find a creative, universally acceptable solution. The commitment of the Spanish and other delegations should serve as an example to those who had called into question the potential of INSTRAW in promoting gender equality.

15. Three research institutes within the United Nations system were funded from the regular budget, and consequently she was unclear as to why efforts were being made to deny INSTRAW the same funding opportunities. She inquired as to the criteria for determining whether an institute was deserving of funds from the regular budget, and recalled that gender

equality and the empowerment of women were among the goals set out in the Millennium Declaration. It was regrettable that a sustained campaign to tarnish the reputation of INSTRAW had affected the objectivity of some Member States regarding the Institute's potential.

16. Turning to the role played by the Secretariat in the current situation, she recalled that General Assembly resolution 56/125 had urged the Secretary-General to appoint, without delay, a Director of INSTRAW. However, the appointment had not been made until June 2002 and thus the Institute had been without the necessary managerial guidance for almost a year. Furthermore, inaccurate, contradictory and sometimes ambiguous reports from various administrative units of the Secretariat had fanned the flames of uncertainty surrounding the Institute. In particular, the Working Group had indicated that it would be useful to have a written account from the Office of Internal Oversight Services which would elaborate further on the issues that had been overlooked in its report on the situation of the Institute.

17. Putting the draft resolution to a vote represented an attempt to subordinate substantive issues to budgetary considerations, which could have serious consequences for the future work of the United Nations. Furthermore, rejecting the recommendations of a Working Group created by the General Assembly and offering no alternatives to those recommendations undermined the authority of the Assembly. She called upon those delegations which were sincerely committed to the advancement of women to vote in favour of the draft resolution.

18. **Mr. Flores** (Spain) said that his delegation strongly supported the revitalization of INSTRAW, especially because it was the only United Nations agency in Latin America and one of only three located in the developing world. Since institutional and leadership problems had been just as significant as the lack of funding, the strengthening of the Institute should be seen in the wider context of United Nations reform.

Explanations of vote before the voting

19. **Mr. O'Neill** (United Kingdom), supported by **Ms. Løj** (Denmark), said that each activity within the United Nations system should be assessed critically to establish whether funds were being used effectively. The recommendation of the Working Group to provide INSTRAW with $500,000 from the regular budget inconsistent with the exceptional nature of the sub granted in 2000. Other social and economic activi including gender-related work, might have to be down in order to release the necessary resources. I view of his delegation, the proposed allocation of million for the period 2003-2005, and any neces cuts in other activities, would not be in the w interests of the United Nations or its Member St The decline in voluntary contributions to INSTR suggested that the majority of Member States did consider the Institute to be a funding priority. T that continued to value its work highly should sufficient funding on a voluntary basis. The issu INSTRAW should remain under consideration by General Assembly, and the Secretary-General sh be requested to report to the entire membership o Organization.

20. **Ms. Grollová** (Czech Republic) said that delegation would vote in favour of the draft resolu despite lingering concerns over the usefulness o activities of INSTRAW at the global level. Much o inefficiency previously associated with the Inst had been caused by factors beyond its control. Working Group had made an objective appraisa INSTRAW, with due regard for the interests o Member States.

21. **Ms. Fried** (Sweden) said that, while Government was a committed advocate for allocation of greater resources to gender-related iss it also stressed that resources should be dependen the achievement of consistency and results. It did endorse the allocation of $500,000 to INSTRAW f the United Nations regular budget, since that am would cover only a small proportion of the cos revitalizing the Institute. Voluntary contributions w still be necessary, and would not be forthcoming u INSTRAW could provide more convincing evidenc its comparative advantage in gender research.

22. **Ms. Hashimoto** (Japan) said that her country been one of the major donors to INSTRAW in re years, and had supported the subsidization of Institute in 2000 with a view to its subseq revitalization. However, the report of the Secret General on the audit of INSTRAW (A/56/907), revealed serious management flaws and shown tha Institute had failed to implement reforms. There little evidence that INSTRAW had a compara advantage over other agencies and institutes

advancing the status of women. Moreover, some of the recommendations of the Working Group were likely to cause further problems. Besides the direct financial implications, the proposed linkage of the Institute to the Department of Economic and Social Affairs risked diverting funds away from more useful programmes. The Commission on the Status of Women, which already received annual reports from INSTRAW, should not be overburdened with a further follow-up report on the measures proposed by the Working Group. The adoption of the draft resolution would undermine the credibility of United Nations reforms.

23. **Mr. Fox** (United States of America) said that regular budget funding for INSTRAW was unacceptable, especially in the light of its poor track record. His delegation remained unconvinced that the Institute was making a worthwhile contribution to the empowerment of women, given its limited accomplishments to date. The resources sought through the draft resolution would be put to better use through other programmes and projects of the United Nations system. The subsidy in 2000 had been intended to sustain the Institute through a period of reform, with a view to appointing a new Director and raising additional voluntary contributions, and INSTRAW had failed to respond to those challenges.

24. **Ms. Maille** (Canada) said that the financial management of INSTRAW had been a matter of concern for many years. Greater firmness was required in view of the scarcity of resources, and her delegation would therefore vote against the draft resolution.

25. *At the request of the United States delegation, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Somalia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Australia, Canada, Israel, Japan, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Marshall Islands, New Zealand, Norway, Russian Federation, San Marino, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

26. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.16/Rev.1 was adopted by 124 votes to 7, with 29 abstentions.*

27. **Ms. Bakker** (Netherlands) said that, despite repeated calls for its revitalization, INSTRAW had failed either to implement reforms or to attract further contributions. The provision of $500,000 was an unsustainable solution, which would merely prolong the situation of uncertainty. In her view, INSTRAW could no longer be sustained by a small number of donors, nor should it be funded through the regular budget. There were more useful gender initiatives carried out by other agencies and programmes such as the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF and the World Bank, which were more worthy recipients of funding.

28. **Ms. Kang** Kyung-wha (Republic of Korea) said that the long-term sustainability of INSTRAW depended on greater accountability and productivity,

and that the recommendations were unsatisfactory on both counts. Therefore her delegation had voted against the draft resolution.

29. **Mr. Barriga** (Liechtenstein) said that the draft resolution had reflected the concerns of all delegations. While INSTRAW had experienced problems in the past, it should be supported rather than abandoned in its hour of need. The temporary financial assistance should be seen as the beginning of the end of the Institute's difficulties.

30. **Mr. Padilla Tonos** (Dominican Republic) said that the overwhelming majority of delegations which had voted in favour of the draft resolution reflected the widespread view that the empowerment of women should take priority over other financial considerations. As the country hosting INSTRAW, the Dominican Republic would continue to defend that principle, as well as the need to strengthen one of the few United Nations agencies in the developing world.

Agenda item 105: Promotion and protection of the rights of children (*continued*)

Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.23: The situation of and assistance to Palestinian children

31. **The Chairman** said that Benin, Brunei Darussalam, the Comoros, Lesotho, the Niger, Suriname, the Syrian Arab Republic and Zimbabwe had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

Explanations of vote before the voting

32. **Mr. Koren** (Israel) said that his delegation opposed draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.23, which had been introduced at the initiative of the Observer for Palestine and was an unprecedented and one-sided document representing the latest attempt by the Palestinians to turn yet another United Nations forum into a political platform for singling out Israel. The draft referred solely to the situation of one specific group of children and ran contrary to the universal spirit of the draft resolutions usually adopted by the Committee on the promotion and protection of the rights of children. One might ask whether one group of children was more deserving of a single, particularized resolution than children suffering elsewhere in the world, for example, in parts of Africa and the Arab world or Israel, for that matter.

33. Even in the context of the Israeli-Palestini conflict, the draft shamelessly distorted reality. It w devoid of any reference to the destructive effects Palestinian terrorism on innocent Israelis and forei nationals. A significant number of Palestinian terror attacks had been deliberately directed at childre including attacks on specific locations where lar numbers of children were known to gather. Only a f days earlier, a Palestinian terrorist had burst into home at Kibbutz Metzer and murdered two childr aged four and five along with their mother, who h tried to protect them. He wondered whether t Committee was to conclude from the draft that the liv of those Israeli children, brutally murdered in th beds in the name of so-called "legitimate resistanc were less valuable than those of Palestinian children whether they had been guilty of something that wo justify denying them the specific protection it call for in the draft for Palestinian children. With t adoption of such totally unfair resolutions, it was n surprising that much of the work of the Gene Assembly was viewed by people around the world w disdain as fundamentally unfair and disconnected fr reality.

34. The draft resolution completely ignored t cynical abuse of children in the Palestinian campai of violence and terrorism and the unbridled incitem to violence in the Palestinian media and educatio system. It also failed to reflect the fact that the cent threat to the well-being of Palestinian children was t terrorists themselves, who endangered civilians on b sides with their criminal and repugnant tactics a were destroying hopes for peace. The draft was clea meant to serve the political interests of the Palestini leadership, not those of Palestinian children.

35. The debate in the Committee should have be conducted in a professional manner by adopting t general resolutions on the protection of the rights children everywhere. To allow the draft curren before the Committee to proceed unopposed would a dangerous precedent. Israel understood and shar the concern over the humanitarian situation in Palestinian territories and welcomed the efforts of international community in that regard. Wh respecting its basic obligation to protect its civilia his Government was doing its utmost to improve humanitarian conditions of the Palestinian people.

36. Israel hoped that efforts to alleviate the situat of all children in the region would be channelled

projects on education for peace and tolerance. Such efforts, however, were not enhanced by one-sided initiatives in the United Nations seeking to perpetuate an alternate and false reality and pretending that one side had a monopoly on the status of victim. He strongly urged all Member States to reject the counterproductive and politicized draft, which should be opposed not only for the sake of the reputation and integrity of the Committee but also for the welfare of the world's children, including Palestinian and Israeli children, without bias, prejudice or blindness to the suffering of others.

37. **Ms. Khalil** (Egypt) recalled that it was her delegation which had introduced the draft resolution.

38. **Ms. Costa** (United States of America) said that her delegation could not support the draft resolution, which was unbalanced, singled out only one party in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict and did not reflect the complexity of the situation on the ground. For example, it ignored the use of Palestinian children to perpetrate suicide bombings despite widespread Palestinian unease with such tactics.

39. Her Government was deeply concerned about the situation of all Palestinian and Israeli children. During the past year there had been hundreds of victims in Israel, the West Bank and Gaza. The omnibus resolution on the Rights of the Child, which included the situation of children in armed conflict, addressed the plight and concerns of all children regardless of where they lived.

40. Her Government's deep commitment to the welfare of Palestinian refugees was reflected in its $120-million contribution to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), whose primary beneficiaries were Palestinian children, as well as direct bilateral assistance provided by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to Palestinian non-governmental organizations and development projects.

41. *At the request of the representatives of the European Union, Israel and the United States of America, a recorded vote was taken.*

In favour:

Afghanistan, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Cuba, Cyprus, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Egypt, Eritrea, Gambia, Ghana, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Pakistan, Paraguay, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Somalia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, United States of America.

Abstaining:

Albania, Andorra, Antigua and Barbuda, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Cameroon, Canada, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay, Vanuatu, Yugoslavia.

42. *Draft resolution A/C.3/57/L.23 was adopted by 95 votes to 3, with 58 abstentions.*

43. **Ms. Loj** (Denmark), speaking on behalf of the European Union, the associated countries Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and, in

addition, Iceland and Norway, said that they had abstained on the draft resolution because they did not support the proliferation of resolutions on agenda items where the Committee had traditionally not dealt separately with country-specific situations, and believed that thematic resolutions should continue to be all-encompassing and should not highlight one situation or another. That was the most efficient way for the General Assembly to do business. They would have welcomed the opportunity to vote in favour had the issue of the needs of Palestinian children been incorporated in one of the existing resolutions on the Middle East.

44. The European Union had consistently expressed its deep concern about the deteriorating humanitarian situation in the West Bank and Gaza. The situation of Palestinian children was in sore need of improvement. It was also concerned at the endangering of the lives and well-being of Israeli children owing to acts of terror. If there was to be a future for peaceful, neighbourly relations between the parties, children needed to learn to live in peace. Israel and the Palestinian Authority must do more to fulfil their responsibilities in those respects. The European Union, which remained strongly committed to improving the humanitarian situation of Palestinians and their children, was the largest supporter of UNRWA.

45. The Union's position on the Palestine question was well known through its work on the numerous General Assembly resolutions on the subject. It also remained ready, in close cooperation with its partners in the Quartet and in the Arab world, to assist the parties in their efforts at finding a final solution to the Middle East conflict and thereby realizing the vision whereby the two States, Israel and Palestine, lived side by side within secure and recognized borders.

46. **Mr. Choi** (Australia) said that the draft resolution should not have been tabled under a thematic item on the rights of children. It was also unbalanced, focusing on criticism of Israeli action and its impact on Palestinian children, and failed to reflect the complexity of the current situation. Australia had therefore abstained. His delegation urged both sides to bring an immediate end to the conflict and to resume negotiations.

47. **Mr. Tekin** (Turkey) said that his Government's stand in relation to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict was clear and very well known by both of the parties, with which Turkey enjoyed close relations. Turkey stro condemned any act of violence resulting in loss of among children of Palestinian, Israeli or any o nationality. Turkey was also strongly against abhorrent abuse of children to commit acts of viole and terrorism. His delegation had supported the d resolution on that understanding and would support other initiative that would address the plight children in similar situations in any part of the worl

48. **Mr. Laurin** (Canada) said that his Governm had consistently supported the protection of chil affected by armed conflict, whose basic needs mus met without impediments or exceptions. Accordin his Government called on Israel to respect obligations under international humanitarian However, his delegation had abstained on the d resolution, which failed to acknowledge that current conflict had taken a toll on both Palestinian Israeli children. The United Nations must address promotion and protection of the rights of children in parts of the world rather than focusing on spec situations or regional conflicts. Canada called on parties to end the violence immediately and resu negotiations so that all children and young people the Middle East could lead normal lives in saf security, dignity and peace.

49. **Ms. Mahouve** (Cameroon) said that delegation had abstained in the vote on the d resolution. Cameroon had often emphasized its g concern at the plight of children in situations of arm conflict; it therefore supported efforts by international community to alleviate the suffering Palestinian children. She urged the two sides to resu negotiations so that the young people of Israel Palestine could live free from fear.

50. **Mr. Knyazhinskiy** (Russian Federation) said t he had voted in favour of the draft resolution des the fact that it was selective. His Government seriously concerned at the situation of children affec by armed conflicts, particularly Palestinian childr Children in a number of countries in the Middle E were living in fear from the constant threat of terro acts.

51. **Ms. Groux** (Switzerland) said that her delegat had abstained in the vote because it would have li to see the question of Palestinian children integra into a general resolution rather than the subject o separate text; the problems they faced applied to

children. The draft resolution had invoked the fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, but it also should have mentioned the obligations of the Palestinian Authority.

52. **Mr. Yerrannaidu** (India) said that his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution in order to express its solidarity with the Palestinian people, although it felt that there should have been a single draft resolution on all children.

53. **Mr. Al-Kidwa** (Observer for Palestine) said that his delegation highly appreciated the support for the draft resolution just adopted, although it failed to understand the position of some of its friends who had not found insufficient reason to support it.

54. A number of delegations had criticized attempts by Palestine to single out Israel, but in the view of his delegation, Israel had singled itself out for years through its policies and actions. It was the only remaining occupying Power at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Other delegations had drawn attention to the unbalanced nature of the draft resolution, but it was not possible to have a balanced text, given the reality of the situation. Palestinian children had been systematically deprived of all their rights by Israeli practices, and would not have a chance to grow up in a normal environment. His delegation regretted any loss of life, especially of children. Palestinian children would have more hope for a better future because of the Committee's support for the draft resolution.

55. **Ms. Tobing-Klein** (Suriname) said that the only reason, in the view of her delegation, that the draft resolution deserved its sponsorship and vote was that it served the best interests of children in accordance with the Convention of the Rights of the Child.

56. **Mr. Tamir** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that his delegation wished to express its dismay and outrage that the Palestinian delegation could speak with complete impunity, while the bodies of 12 Jews brutally massacred on their way to prayer lay in Hebron. That delegation should have expressed regret for those deaths, rather than making more groundless accusations.

57. **Mr. Al-Kidwa** (Observer for Palestine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that the Palestinian Authority and its leadership did regret any loss of life, but the incident had occurred in an occupied city. Four hundred Israeli settlers had been brought in to colonize Hebron illegally. Since their presence was illegal, under the fourth Geneva Convention responsibility for their safety lay with the occupying Power. Such a situation should be expected to elicit extreme reactions. The source of the whole problem was the Israeli occupation.

58. **Mr. Tamir** (Israel), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that, with a complete end to Palestinian terror, renewed negotiations would lead to a peace settlement, including an Israeli withdrawal. He urged the Palestinian Authority to take that path.

59. **Mr. Al-Kidwa** (Observer for Palestine), speaking in exercise of the right of reply, said that Israel must be ready to end the illegal occupation, condemn the war crimes it had committed and accept the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and independence, before it could expect the actions it demanded.

Agenda item 104: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (*continued*) (A/56/3, A/57/12 and Add.1, A/57/203, 324 and 583)

60. **Mr. Yerrannaidu** (India) said that his delegation welcomed the news that the number of people of concern to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) had fallen from 22 million to 20 million in the course of 2001, and that over 2 million people had returned to Afghanistan since the repatriation operation had begun.

61. With regard to the High Commissioner's new initiatives, his delegation recognized the collective effort which had gone into framing the Agenda for Protection (A/57/12/Add.1, annex IV). Its non-binding nature gave it the flexibility necessary for dealing with humanitarian issues that did not always respond to narrow, legalistic approaches. Developing countries predominated among countries of origin as well as countries of asylum; neither the duty to receive refugees nor the real costs were fairly apportioned. The success of the Agenda would depend on the partnerships it could foster. His delegation welcomed the recognition of the need for burden-sharing arrangements.

62. The new approach to durable solutions, the "four Rs" — repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction — should be successful, but the High

Commissioner's proposal for development through local integration must be thought through carefully. The implications of local integration in a developing country could be far-reaching and would not be a sustainable option when dealing with massive refugee flows. The "UNHCR 2004" process initiated by the High Commissioner in 2001 deserved support, as it was not merely a fund-raising exercise but sought to strengthen international solidarity and burden-sharing. The High Commissioner's "Convention Plus" approach was another idea which merited further consideration. The contribution of countries not party to the 1951 Convention or the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees must be given due recognition.

63. *Mr. Morikawa (Japan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.*

64. **Mr. Vienravi** (Thailand) said that the overall situation of refugees and displaced persons worldwide remained bleak, and durable solutions remained a distant dream for millions. Voluntary repatriation had proven to be the best and more effective solution, and the involvement of the countries of origin was crucial. Those countries had an obligation to accept their nationals in safety and dignity. Nevertheless, resettlement should be considered as another effective option in some cases, in keeping with the principle of burden-sharing.

65. Prevention was the best remedy, and it was therefore imperative to address the protracted situations at the root of refugee flows. Greater resources should also be allocated to facilitate sustainable repatriation, reintegration, rehabilitation and reconstruction. The plight of internally displaced persons must be recognized, and his delegation took note with interest of the establishment of an inter-agency Unit on Internal Displacement (A/57/1, para. 75), which should contribute to a more collaborative response.

66. Thailand hoped that the Agenda for Protection would truly be an agenda for solutions for refugees and displaced persons worldwide, and also took note with great interest of the "Convention Plus" approach. However, it remained concerned about the initiative for development through local integration. Its implementation must have the consent of the host countries. Promoting self-reliance as an automatic precursor to local integration could undercut the principle of shared responsibility.

67. As a country of asylum for the past three decades, Thailand had been faithful to its humanitarian commitment. More than 110,000 of the millions who had sought temporary refuge there remained in nine temporary shelters along the western border. Their protracted presence had a profound effect on Thai society. Thailand had done its utmost for refugees despite numerous constraints, and it believed that greater recognition by UNHCR of the contribution of host developing countries would foster a new spirit of partnership. An effective solution must be comprehensive, with a framework encompassing all stakeholders. The Comprehensive Plan of Action for Indo-Chinese Refugees was a shining example and an important precedent.

68. He reiterated Thailand's readiness to cooperate with the High Commissioner in helping uprooted people fulfil their common dream of returning home.

69. **Ms. Kornelioukk** (Belarus) said that her delegation shared the view that, in a world with numerous conflicts and inequality in social and economic development, the problem of refugees remained one of the most important matters on the international agenda. Because of its location at the crossroads of Europe, Belarus dealt with the problems of migrants and refugees daily. Migration was a national, regional and international phenomenon, which if not controlled, could undermine the stability and security of society.

70. Illegal migration had more than a humanitarian dimension. Organized criminal groups had become involved; illegal commerce, including trafficking in arms and drugs, was often associated with migration, along with increased rates of HIV and tuberculosis. In recent years Belarus had detained thousands of illegal migrants at its borders, including over 300 Afghans. As a transit country, Belarus was requesting additional resources from the international community to deal with the needs of migrants and refugees.

71. In 2001, Belarus had acceded to the 1951 Convention and was working to bring its legislation into line. As of 1 October 2002, over 600 persons, mostly Afghans, had been granted refugee status. Their integration was a priority, and education campaigns on refugee rights were being conducted. A network of social-service organizations and centres for refugees had been established. Refugee children were not

separated from their parents and had access to the national educational system.

72. Her delegation welcomed the decline in the number of refugees and the growing number of returnees. However, it shared the concerns expressed at discriminatory measures imposed by some Governments against refugees on grounds of nationality or ethnicity. In the context of the Global Consultations on International Protection (A/57/12, para. 15), her delegation welcomed the initiative to build on the 1951 Convention by including the categories of economic refugees and ecological migrants, which would include the more than 135,000 residents of Belarus living in the area affected by the Chernobyl disaster who had been forced to leave their homes.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.